

Appl. No. 09/927,439Response dated: November 24, 2004**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace paragraph [0001] with the following amended paragraph:

[0001] This application is related to U.S. patent application Ser. No. 09/927,441 [[\_\_\_\_\_]]  
entitled "Methods for Reliable Communication of Link Monitoring Information in Optical  
Communications Networks", to Mellert et al., filed on an even date herewith, the disclosure of which  
is incorporated by reference.